



THE CITY OF WINDSOR

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

DREW DILKENS, DBA
MAYOR

Hon. Sylvia Jones
Solicitor General
George Drew Building
18th Floor - 25 Grosvenor Street
Toronto, ON M7A 1Y6

March 17, 2022

Hon. Marco Mendicino
Minister of Public Safety
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Hon. Bill Blair
Minister of Emergency Preparedness
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Dear Ministers Jones, Mendicino and Blair:

On February 7, 2022, the City of Windsor was the site of an illegal occupation at and around the access routes for the Ambassador Bridge. This protracted activity disrupted the vital trade and commerce route between the United States and Canada. Subsequent to a successful Injunction Order granted by Ontario Superior Court Chief Justice Morawetz on February 11, 2022, the Windsor Police Service, with the tactical and logistical assistance of the OPP, RCMP and other police agencies, were able to clear the roadways for traffic on February 14, 2022. Local police did their best to clear access to impacted businesses along Huron Church Road (the main access roadway to the Ambassador Bridge) as quickly as possible; however, for most businesses along this roadway, access to their locations remained significantly limited. Moreover, commercial vehicle traffic was adversely impacted to varied degrees until March 13, 2022, more than a month after the initial occupation began.

Through the quick local response, supported by the OPP, RCMP and other agencies, the Windsor Police Service guided a safe conclusion to the illegal Ambassador Bridge blockade and restored access to this vital international trade corridor. To be clear, the safe and peaceful conclusion to this blockade incident required a massive supplementation of resources and logistics that could not have been sourced locally. Overtime and logistical supports required to bring about a peaceful resolution of the recent illegal occupation at the Ambassador Bridge has resulted in a separate reimbursement request from the City of Windsor to Provincial and Federal Finance Department officials.

At this time, all levels of Government are engaged in various reviews associated with the steps each of our Administrations undertook in response to the protest activity earlier this year. I understand the Federal Government's invocation of the *Emergencies Act* results in a mandatory review of the situation and response to the provoking crisis. Similarly, the Provincial Declaration of Emergency, which was specifically tied to the protest activity in Ottawa and Windsor, requires a due diligence review of actions and next steps. At the City of Windsor, our team is focused on the immediate impacts and strategies as

well as longer-term solutions necessary to prevent such protest activity from once again crippling the national economy.

Windsor's critically important international trade routes connect directly into local municipal roads in the City of Windsor. It is worth noting that, save for the presence of federal border security officials on site at the customs/border plazas who are responsible for processing international travel, there is no further strategic or resource support provided to the City of Windsor in facilitating the safety and security of these international trade routes. For clarification, traffic from both the Windsor-Detroit Tunnel and the Ambassador Bridge exit immediately onto municipal roads and are several kilometers from the Province's 401 Highway network.

The recent blockade incident at the Ambassador Bridge highlighted a vulnerability in our governance model. The City of Windsor is certainly responsible for local infrastructure and the Windsor Police Service is capable of providing adequate and effective law enforcement for our community. That said, the need for broader collaboration and support from Provincial and Federal governments to bolster the safety and security of our borders appears obvious.

To that end and with an aim of mitigating similar risk in the future, we would be pleased to participate and contribute in a meaningful way to a collaborative debriefing of the recent Ambassador Bridge blockade regarding emergency regulatory obligations. We look forward to working together to protect our important international border crossings through human and capital resource planning and asset deployment.

I look forward to a reply at your earliest convenience.



Drew Dilkens
Mayor, City of Windsor

CC.

Lisa Gretzky, MPP (Windsor West)
Percy Hatfield, MPP (Windsor—Tecumseh)
Brian Masse, MP (Windsor West)
Irek Kusmierczyk, MP (Windsor – Tecumseh)